

Appl. No. : unknown
Filed : herewith

REMARKS

The title has been amended to delete the word "novel" which is not considered part of the title as per M.P.E.P. 606. The claims have been amended to conform with the rules of practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The specification has been amended to recite the International Application and priority application. The word "CLAIMS" has been deleted and substituted by "WHAT IS CLAIMED IS" so that subsequently appearing claims will be the object of a sentence as specified by M.P.E.P. section 608.01(m). As a result of this preliminary amendment, Claims 32-37 have been added and Claims 4, 5, 8-13, 19-22, and 25-29 have been amended. Accordingly, Claims 1-37 are presented for examination. No new matter is being added herewith.

Abstract

An Abstract on a separate sheet is submitted herewith.

Conclusion

Should there be any questions concerning this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned agent at the telephone number appearing below. Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: Dec. 2, 2004

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STREPTOCOCCUS THERMOPHILUS STRAINS PRODUCING STABLE HIGH-MOLECULAR-MASS EXOPOLYSACCHARIDES

Abstract of the Disclosure

The invention relates to the field of exopolysaccharide producing lactic acid bacteria. The invention relates to methods and culture media for producing large amounts of exopolysaccharides in safe and simple fermentation conditions. The invention more specifically relates to the characterization of a Streptococcus thermophilus ST 111 strain producing a stable high-molecular-mass heteropolysaccharide, its use in functional starter cultures and its use in food fermentation processes such as processes producing milk products, yoghurt and cheese for texture improvement and decreasing syneresis during fermentation and in the fermented product.